

REMARKS

The Office Action of July 23, 2003, has been carefully studied. The claims in the application are now only allowable or already allowed claims 3-5, 7 and 8 and new claims 9-12 which should also be formally allowable consistent with what is indicated as being allowable in the Office Action. Accordingly, applicants believe that all issues have been resolved and the present application should now be in condition for formal allowance; such is respectfully requested.

The proposed drawing correction having been approved, attached herewith is a formal replacement drawing. Approval and entry are respectfully requested.

Acknowledgement by the PTO of the receipt of applicants' papers filed under \$119 is noted.

As regards the information disclosure statement (IDS) filed March 26, 2003, applicants agree that no copy of document AE was submitted. As noted on the first page thereof, bottom paragraph, documents AC and AE are believed to be substantially the same, and accordingly only a copy of document AC was filed.

Claims 1, 2 and 6 have been rejected under §102 as being anticipated by Fukutomi et al USP 5,426,850. Claims 1, 2 and 6 have now been deleted from the present application, without prejudice to applicants' rights to pursue the subject matter of such claims in a continuing application. Accordingly, as these claims have been deleted from the present file, the rejection need not be addressed at this time.

Claim 5 has been allowed and claims 3, 4, 7 and 8 have only been objected to as being dependent from a rejected base claim, but are otherwise deemed to be directed to "allowable subject matter". Applicants accordingly understand that these claims are deemed by the PTO to define novel and unobvious subject matter under §§102 and 103.

Claim 3 dependent on claim 1 has now been rewritten in independent form. Claim 4 dependent on claim 1 has now been rewritten in independent form. Claims 7 and 8 depend from claim 3. Therefore, now all of these claims should now be in condition for formal allowance.

New claim 9 corresponds to allowable claim 3 dependent on claim 2, and therefore new claim 9 should be in condition for formal allowance. New claim 10 corresponds to claim 4 dependent on claim 2 rewritten in independent form, and therefore claim 10 should also be in condition for formal

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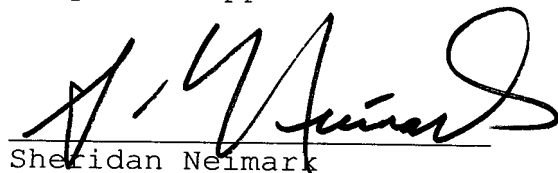
allowance. Claims 11 and 12 respectively correspond to claim 7 and 8 dependent on claim 9 (corresponding to claim 3 dependent on claim 2) and therefore these claims should also be in condition for formal allowance.

Applicants respectfully request favorable consideration and formal allowance, and respectfully await the receipt of a Notice of Allowance.

Respectfully submitted,

BROWDY AND NEIMARK, P.L.L.C.
Attorneys for Applicants

By


Sheridan Neimark
Registration No. 20,520

SN:jaa
Telephone No.: (202) 628-5197
Facsimile No.: (202) 737-3528
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